Toad-headed lizards of the genus *Phrynocephalus* include over 40 distinct species that inhabit arid regions, and are distributed through south and southeastern Europe, southwest Asia (Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Arabian Peninsula) through Middle Asia to east Asia (north-western China). (Anderson, 1999; Ananjeva et al., 2006; Barbanov & Ananjeva, 2007). They constitute one of the major components of the central Asian desert fauna and are highly adapted to sand dunes and desert environments (Ananjeva et al., 2006). Most of the Iranian Plateau, especially its eastern areas, consist of arid regions and therefore suitable environmental for *Phrynocephalus* species. To date, seven species have been recorded from Iran (Anderson, 1999).

*Phrynocephalus raddei* Boettger, 1890, has been described from Perevalnaja railroad station, southwestern Turkmenistan. It has also been reported from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and northern part of Afghanistan, but no documented report of occurrence of this taxon has been reported from Iran. It usually inhabit in diverse kinds of sandy, clayey and cobbly substrate with sparse herbaceous vegetation (Anderson 1999; Bannikov et al., 1977; Leviton and Anderson, 1970). Due to large stretches of similar habitat across the nearby borders with Turkmenistan, the presence of *Ph. raddei* can also be expected within the political borders of Iran (Anderson 1999).

During our field work in September 2013, two individuals (males) of *Phrynocephalus raddei* were collected from Sarakhs district in North Khorasan province, (N: 36.280, E: 60.886) north-eastern Iran (Figure 1, 2). Both individuals were collected at about 519 m elevation in a sandy habitat (Figure 3). The animal specimens were preserved in 80% alcohol and deposited in the herpetological collection of Hakim Sabzevari University with museum numbers ERP 3567-3568.

Both collected specimens are of considerable morphological uniformity, and easily diagnosable as *Phrynocephalus raddei* based on the morphological

---

1 Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran
2 Iranian Plateau Herpetology Research Group (IPHRG), Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran
3 Khorasan Razavi Environment Head Office, Department of Environment, Iran
4 Department of Zoology, Faculty of Biology, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran
5 Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Hakim Sabzevari University, Sabzevar, Iran

* Corresponding author e-mail: khosravani.azar@gmail.com

---

**Figure 1.** Location of Sarakhs in North Khorasan province, where *Phrynocephalus raddei* specimens were collected.
diagnostic keys (Anderson 1999). Measurements (in mm), scation characters and color pattern of one of the specimens (ERP 3568) are as follows: Length of snout to vent: 44.3; tail length: 59.1; forelimb length: 25.2; hindlimb length: 38.5; head height: 7.1; head length: 13; head width: 12.39; number of supralabial scales (left side): 16; number of infralabial scales (left side): 15; number of abdominal scales across middle of belly: 125; number of lamellae under the 4th finger: 23; number of scales between eyes in the widest region: 20. The dorsal coloration is cream, grayish or yellowish with 3 pairs of dark transverse marks, Tail above with dark spots; ventral surface of tail with 4 dark bars (Figure 2).

Although dorsal color of this species is alike to that of *Phrynocephalus persicus* and *Ph. helioscopus*, but scales of dorsum in these taxa are heterogeneous whereas dorsal scales in *Ph. raddei* are homogeneous (Anderson, 1999). In summary, the present record of *Ph. raddei* documents its existence in Iran and therefore the number of the *Phrynocephalus* species known from Iran increases to eight.

**References**


